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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 006098

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (MENNUTI); S (CRAIG KELLY)

EMBASSY VATICAN MESSAGE NO. 208/001

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/11

TAGS: PREL RM RM VT VTPREL

SUBJECT: SECRETARY POWELL'S MEETING WITH VATICAN

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FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: A) VATICAN 5999; REF B) VATICAN 5695

CLASSIFIED BY AMB. JAMES NICHOLSON FOR REASONS 1.5 (B)  
AND (D).

11. (C) SECRETARY TAURAN IS TRAVELLING TO BUCHAREST SPECIFICALLY TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY. HE TOLD AMBASSADOR NICHOLSON ON NOVEMBER 20 (REF A) THAT THE POPE HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO MEET THE SECRETARY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT THE TWO TOPICS THAT THE POPE ASKED HIM TO RAISE WITH THE SECRETARY ARE THE CURRENT SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

12. (C) AFGHANISTAN: VATICAN CONCERNS AT THE U.S.-LED AFGHANISTAN CAMPAIGN BOIL DOWN TO FEARS OF AN UNCONTROLLED HUMANITARIAN CRISIS, DISTRUST OF THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT, AND A JUDGMENT THAT IRAQ SHOULD NOT BE THE TARGET OF ANY EXTENSION OF THE CONFLICT. WORRIES OF A HUMANITARIAN MELTDOWN TRIGGERED A NUMBER OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM THE POPE, NONE OF WHICH CRITICIZED OF THE WAR EFFORT. INDEED, THE POPE RESERVED THE HARSHEST CRITICISM THAT WE'VE EVER SEEN FROM HIM FOR THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS "INHUMAN ATTACK OF SEPTEMBER 11." FM TAURAN HIMSELF SUPPORTED THE U.S.' RIGHT TO SELF DEFENSE (A KEY COMPONENT, ALONG WITH PROPORTIONALITY OF RESPONSE, OF THE VATICAN'S THEORY OF JUST WAR) IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FRENCH

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MAGAZINE LA CROIX. VATICAN FM EQUIVALENT CARDINAL SODANO EXPRESSED NOVEMBER 19 HIS HOPE THAT THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN WOULD "LEAD TO THE FORMATION OF A DEMOCRATIC STATE, RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, FREEDOM AND ESPECIALLY RELIGIOUS LIBERTY." HE ALSO DEBUNKED THE NOTION THAT THE AFGHANISTAN CONFLICT IS THREATENING INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE.

13. (C) CARITAS, A VATICAN AID ARM, HIGHLIGHTED THE VATICAN'S CONCERN BY LAUNCHING A WORLDWIDE APPEAL FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FOR AFGHANISTAN ON 10/25, INITIALLY SEEKING USD 11 MILLION. ABOUT THE SAME TIME, THE VATICAN DFM CONVEYED THAT SHOULD THE CONFLICT DRAG ON AND THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS THUS WORSEN, THE VATICAN WOULD FIND IT HARD TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING A MORE CRITICAL STANCE TOWARD THE CAMPAIGN. VATICAN WORRIES HAVE LESSENED SOMEWHAT FOLLOWING ANTI-TALIBAN TERRITORIAL GAINS, WHICH THE VATICAN HOPES FAVOR THE RESUMPTION, INCREASE, AND MORE EFFICIENT DISTRIBUTION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. AFGHANISTAN AND THE VATICAN SHARE NO HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP AND CHRISTIANS IN AFGHANISTAN ARE FEW IN NUMBER, THESE BEING THE FACTORS THAT COMMONLY DRIVE VATICAN BILATERAL FOREIGN POLICY. STILL, THE VATICAN EXPRESSES CONCERN THAT THE CONFLICT COULD UNDERMINE THE STABILITY OF PAKISTAN, THUS WORSENING THE DIFFICULT SITUATION OF THAT NATION'S ONE MILLION CATHOLICS. THE VATICAN MFA MOREOVER DOUBTS THE STEADINESS AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF GENERAL MUSHARRAF, REPROACHED FOR A FAILURE TO PROTECT CHRISTIAN MINORITIES AND FOR FOMENTING VIOLENCE IN KASHMIR. LASTLY, THE VATICAN

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MFA HAS INDICATED -- QUIETLY THUS FAR -- THAT IT WOULD VIEW POORLY AN EXTENSION OF THE WAR INTO IRAQ (WHERE MANY MORE CHALCEDONIAN CHRISTIANS ENJOY RELATIVE -- FOR AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY -- FREEDOM UNDER THE BAATHIST REGIME). INDEED, THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY WILL BE LISTENING ATTENTIVELY SHOULD THE POPE PUBLICLY DECLARE THAT IRAQ MUST REMAIN OFF-LIMITS.

14. (C) THE MIDDLE EAST: THE VATICAN WISHES TO CLARIFY ITS POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST. IT IS A POSITION

THAT HAS EVOLVED SUBSTANTIALLY OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS. FOR MANY YEARS, THE VATICAN CALLED FOR THE "INTERNATIONALIZATION" OF JERUSALEM. IN THE LATE 90'S THIS POSITION CHANGED TO THE "INTERNATIONALIZATION" OF JERUSALEM "INTRAMURA" (WITHIN THE WALLS). FOR APPROXIMATELY A YEAR NOW, THE VATICAN HAS REFORMULATED ITS POSITION. IT HAS DROPPED THE CALL FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION. IT IS NOW ASKING THAT THE SHRINES OF THE THREE RELIGIONS PRESERVE THEIR UNIQUE AND SACRED CHARACTER THROUGH "INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES", IN SUCH A WAY THAT IN THE FUTURE "NONE OF THE PARTIES WILL BE ABLE TO CLAIM FOR ITSELF EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OF THESE SACRED PARTS OF THE CITY". POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CITY WOULD BE A MATTER FOR THE ISRAELIS AND THE PALESTINIANS TO NEGOTIATE. THE POPE HAS PUBLICLY CALLED FOR BOTH/BOTH SIDES TO STOP THE SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE. ANOTHER INDICATION THAT THE VATICAN IS ATTEMPTING TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE PEACE PROCESS IS THE OCTOBER 30 MEETING BETWEEN POPE JOHN PAUL AND CHAIRMAN ARAFAT. AT THAT MEETING (REF B), THE POPE STRONGLY URGED ARAFAT TO PERSONALLY

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	VCE-00
	NSAE-00	SSO-00	SS-00	SNIS-00	NISC-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	SAS-00	/003W					

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O 271603Z NOV 01  
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN  
TO SECSTATE/WASHDC/IMMEDIATE 6098  
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

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CONTROL THE PALESTINIAN VIOLENCE.  
NICHOLSON

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